of copra. The Government too had felt the need for this on a former occasion when the tariff value of the article was reduced from Rs.22½ to Rs. 18 per cwt. The tariff value should be reduced still further in pursuance of that policy. The existing duty on copra was the highest rate leviable according to the terms of the Interportal Trade Convention. That was a serious handicap to the export of that article and the chief cause for the fall in the price thereof. In the interests of the people at large, the duty should be reduced and their economic condition materially increased.

DEWAN'S REPLY.—Mr. John Abraham, in regard to the last sentence in your representation, I have to say that Government will consider your representation and the request you have made. You will appreciate that a question of tariffs is not a simple one. You said in the beginning of your representation that Government increased the tariff value on copra in order to encourage one of the key industries of the State *viz.*, the oil-mill industry though towards the close you stated that Government should not on any consideration of profit to itself neglect to interfere in this matter, so that you yourself concede that it is not the desire to make profit that induced the Government to raise the tariff rate. In every question of tariff, there are several considerations which have to be weighed and some of them you will find pulling in opposite directions. There is the interest of the ryot who has to sell his copra; on the other hand, there is the interest of the oil-mill owner whose industry deserves encouragement at the hands of the Government. All these considerations have to be weighed by the Government before they can take a final step. Therefore all that I can say is that Government are also aware of the difficulties which the ryots are undergoing on account of the fall in the price of copra. You may remember that I have referred to this question in my Address. I can only say now that Government are prepared to consider any suggestion that comes from the people that would be helpful in removing the difficulties that cultivators are labouring under. But I cannot give you an off-hand reply on this question of tariff.

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14. Disafforestation of lands.

MR. N. TOMMAN JOSEPH (*Todupuzha taluk*) said that Travancore was primarily an agricultural country. With the growth of population, the import of rice and paddy was also rapidly rising. While in 1066 M. E., the value of paddy and rice imported was 17½ chs. per head of population, in 1103 it had risen to Rs. 7. To balance the import of this large quantity of food-stuffs, Travancore had only ginger, cocoanut, pepper and cardamoms to be exported. In the interests of the economic condition of the people, it was necessary to maintain the balance of trade in favour of the State. In spite of the best efforts and advice of the Agricultural Department, the yield of lands had not materially increased. It was therefore absolutely necessary to make more and more lands available for cultivation to meet the agricultural needs of the ever-increasing population. It was also essential to provide the landless

people with house-sites. At the time of constituting the reserves, the boundaries were fixed so as to include within them dry lands to the great disadvantage of the agriculturists. Without an adequate extent of dry lands, it was not possible to carry on peaceful cultivation and prevent the inroads of wild animals. The boundaries should therefore be refixed so as to leave a margin of at least half a furlong around the above-said registered enclosures. There were also other occupied dry lands within the notified boundaries of the reserves. Pending final notification of the reserves, the occupants of those lands were asked to take up leases of such lands on the express undertaking that no permanent improvements would be made, while as a matter of fact those lands already contained substantial improvements. Such lands should be registered in the names of occupants.

The Kanni Elam tract situated in the Karimannur and Karikod *pakuthies*, has not been leased out to applicants. No harm could be done to the forest trees by the lessees, as shade trees were necessary for cardamom cultivation. The land should therefore be leased to the applicants without delay. Lastly, lands for house-sites and digging trenches for the prevention of the inroads of wild animals should also be granted to the agriculturists so that they might successfully carry on their cultivation.

There were extensive areas within reserved forests which could be made available for the above purposes. The Government should therefore adopt a policy of disafforesting all lands fit for cultivation. Objection on the ground that forests should be preserved for purpose of rainfall could not prevail, because there were differences of opinion among the scientists on the point. The lands would bring in large revenue to the Government in the shape of *taravila*, *tadivila*, etc., instead of the small profit from forest produce.

An extent of 1,200 acres of land, situated north of the Kaliyar Estate and comprised in Survey Nos. 1471/1, 1463/1, 1459/1 and 1478/1 of the Todupuzha reserve, was suitable for paddy cultivation. Formerly *virippu* cultivation was being carried on on this area. It was also adjacent to inhabited places. It should be disafforested and brought under registry one-half by auction and the rest without auction in the names of poor people.

There were certain *ayacut* wet lands within the Todupuzha reserve. Those lands and the surrounding dry lands were formerly under the occupation of the registry holders.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Tomman Joseph, your first request is that more lands must be thrown out of reserved forests for the purpose of cultivation. You know that it is the policy of the Government also to throw out of the reserves swampy areas and other lands fit for cultivation *as far as that can be done without detriment to the forest policy of the Government*. It is not yet time, as you yourself admit, to say definitely that the preservation of forests has nothing to do with the seasonal conditions of the country. You yourself concede that there is

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difference of opinion among experts as to whether the preservation of forests is necessary for the continuance of the rainfall which a country is getting. We cannot therefore say that forests are maintained merely for the purpose of the profit that is made by the sale of forest produce. As far as possible, Government are ready to throw out cultivable lands which are included in the reserves, *so far as that can be done*, as I said, *without detriment to the forests*.

In the second place, you said that for lands which are in occupation and under cultivation within the reserved forests there is not a sufficient margin of land left around. I understand that, as a matter of fact, there is a Government order which says that, for every plot of wet land inside the reserves, which is registered, an extent of one-fourth of that area must be left as margin surrounding it for the convenience of cultivation. I also understand that, during the local inspection, which you yourself referred to, it was found that, in the sale of the particular land, the margin that has been left was sufficient for the convenience of the cultivator. If there are any particular plots where a sufficient margin of land has not been left for the benefit of the cultivator and if such cases are brought to the notice of the Conservator of Forests or of the Government, the matter will be considered.

You referred to the disafforestation of four particular survey numbers in the Todupuzha reserve. I find that this subject was brought up on a previous occasion and that the reply then given was that, in two of these survey numbers, *viz.*, 1478/1 and 1459/1, some extent of land had already been disafforested, and that, with regard to the other two survey numbers, *viz.*, 1463/1 and 1471/1, they comprised some of the best forests of the Todupuzha Reserve and that therefore Government could not throw open that land for cultivation.

Your next point was about the Kanni Elam tract, that is, lands which were at one time cardamom estates but which have subsequently been abandoned. The policy of Government is to grant leases of these lands. The Conservator of Forests will render all help to those who take leases of these lands.

The last point that you mentioned is about house-sites, trenches, etc. That will be considered.

15. The inadequacy of the inducement offered by the Government for the destruction of proscribed rogue elephants.

MR. ALBERT J. WRIGHT (*Kanan Devan Planters' Association*) referred to the decision of the Government to the effect that a person who shoots a wild rogue elephant should not consider himself entitled to the tusks of the animal shot and said that the monetary reward of Rs. 50 offered instead was quite inadequate. The planting community did not take up the matter from a mercenary point of view; but the only inducement that would tempt them to pursue the game of a rogue elephant was the tusks which they could keep as a trophy. Shooting a proscribed rogue elephant was very expensive. An elephant travels

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